SIRIUS

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TERI SUE

Wandering Star

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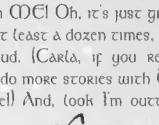
TERI SUE WOOD CREATOR, WRITER, AND ARTIST • PRESTON A. SWEET PROOF-READER • TRULAWNA FRANSENE VILLALOBOS ARTISTIC ASSISTANT

Egads! It's 1997, isn't it? When I was getting used to the ups and downs of 1996–blammo, it's over–and here I am, peering at a new calendar and wondering if I should just stay in bed. But, HEY! There is one thing to look forward to in 1997, and that's the February edition of OVERSTREET FAN! Yep, and this is thanks to Arnold T. Blumberg the Production Manager at OSF. Ya see, I had this crazy idea for a DARKLIGHT contest, and not only did Arnold convince OSF to go for it, but he got them to throw in an interview as well! Whee! What fun! So anyway, everybody say, "thank you, Arnold" and run right out and get a copy! So, did everyone have a nice holiday? Did ya get any cool gifts? I did. I got ACTION FIGURES!!!! Whee! Yee heh heh! Yep, and Trulawna got a Buffalo Bills football player (Before ya ask, a TOY!), and a coupl'a Matchbox cars, and lemme tell ya, her toys didn't stand a chance against my Spidey, my THE TICK villain, and my Darth Vader. Zam! Blam! Pow! And "May the Force be with you!" Now that I've left ya with that stunning image of my "maturity," I suppose this is a good time to spring the news on ya that I am now a Girl Scout Co-leader. Yep, of Brownie Troop #565. Tru is the leader-leader, which means she does all the important stuff. Me, I just stand around , helping the girls with their crafts and basically do the unimportant stuff. And ya know, life was good, until a horrible twist of fate left me, and the other co-leader, Rhonda, alone with the girls last week.... You see, Tru, being the "Cookie Coordinator" for the Pass area, was off at a cookie meeting, so it was just me and Rhonda. I wasn't worried. I thought, "how hard could it be to run a meeting? Twelve girls, ages ranging from five to eight. Should be a piece of cake." (Cue music from PSYCHO). Halfway through the meeting, surrounded by utter chaos, little girls running around like wind-up toys gone berserk, little voices going, "Teacher! Teacher/I Look at this! Listen to this! Help me with this! Teacher! Teacher! Teacher!".... I looked up at the ceiling. There were rafters up there, and I remembered the old black and white version of the HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME I'd watched a few days ago, and suddenly I was seized with the desire to leap up, swing from those rafters and scream, "SANCTUARY! SANCTUARY!" (Sigh, I should'a stayed home with my action figures.) Before I exit left, lemme tell ya about MYTHOGRAPHY #1. If ya haven't seen it yet, find it. Heck, I'd be willing ta buy it for the cover alone. Michael Cohen (of STRANGE ATTRACTORS) doesn't show off very often, but when he does, he blows all'a us other artists outta the water. The cover is just stupendous. But, I must admit, my favorite part of the issue is the story by Carla Speed McNeil. Remember her name? I was raving about her self-published book, FINDER a while ago. (Let me rave about it again, while I'm at it. Everybody listen: THIS IS A GREAT BOOK. If ya can't find it, contact her at 1452 Middletown Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401. Thanks.) Well, anyway, she's back in MYTHOGRAPHY with a little story called MYSTERY DATE. She warned me, back at the '96 San Diego Con that she'd patterned a character after Madison in it and WHUF! The lady does Madison better than ME! Oh, it's just great! I've read the thing, jeez, at least a dozen times, and each time I laugh out loud. (Carla, if you read this, please, please, please do more stories with Dr. Zee! Please, please, please!) And, look I'm outta room. See ya next ish!



WANDERING STAR Vol. I #19. FIRST PRINTING. Published by SIRIUS Entertainment, Inc. Lawrence Salamone, President. Robb Horan, Publisher. Joseph Linsner, Art Director. Correspondence: P.O. Box 128, Stanhope NJ 07874. WANDERING STAR © 1996 Teri Sue Wood. SIRIUS & the DogStar logo are trademark and copyright SIRIUS Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Hey, anybody wanna buy any Girl Scout cookies???

THEY CAME FROM MA'DIVES IN A VARIETY OF SHIPS.
FRIGHTENED, LOST, HUNGRY, AND LOOKING FOR SHELTER.
BROKENHEARTED.
THERE REALLY WEREN'T THAT MANY SHIPS. NOT EVEN A HUNDRED.
A MERE HANDFUL WHEN YOU THINK IN TERMS OF AN ENTIRE PLANETARY POPULATION.

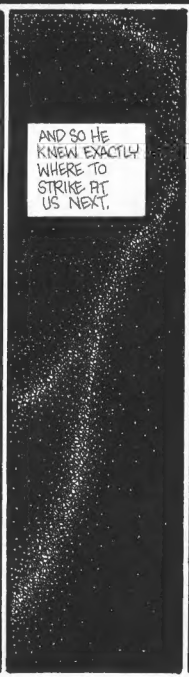
AND THESE FEW SHIPS HAD BEEN RELEASED BY NARZ,
...SET FREE WITH HIS TAINTED BLESSING,
...SO THAT THEY COULD TELL THE ALLIANCE ABOUT THE KEKAKOPOLOUS,

...TO LET US KNOW WHAT WAS COMING,

... AND TO SET THE SEED FOR HIS NEXT ATTACK.

NARZ KNEW THAT THE ALLIANCE WAS DIVIDED.

AND HE KNEW THAT WE HAD TO BE TIRED.

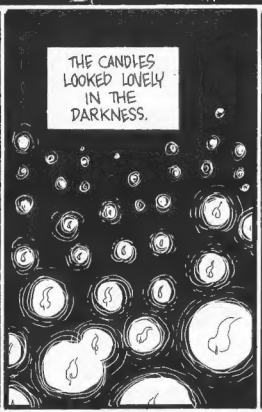

AND SO HE KNEW EXACTLY WHERE TO STRIKE AT US NEXT.

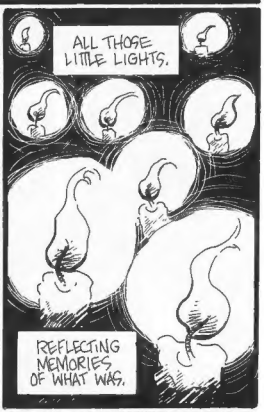
BUT THAT WAS STILL TO COME,
...AND IN THE MEANWHILE, THE ALLIANCE HAD DEAD TO BURY.

TWO

THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR EARTH, AND ALL THOSE LOST IN THIS WAR, BEGAN AT NIGHTFALL.
IT WAS LIKE EVERY OTHER MEMORIAL SERVICE.
IT WAS THERE TO TELL YOU, "GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN!"

BUT I KNEW THAT ALREADY.


THE CANDLES LOOKED LOVELY IN THE DARKNESS.


ALL THOSE LITTLE LIGHTS,
REFLECTING MEMORIES OF WHAT WAS.

JUST LIKE THOSE STARS,

HOW OLD IS THE LIGHT FROM THOSE STARS WHEN IT FINALLY REACHES OUR EYES?

EARTH'S LIGHT WAS UP THERE SOMEWHERE.
AND THE LIGHT THAT I SAW...

...WAS IT FROM AN EARTH THAT STILL THOUGHT THAT IT WAS ALIVE?
AN EARTH THAT DID NOT KNOW THAT IT WAS DEAD YET?

Thrice

WHUF!
I JUST LOOOOVE KICKING MYSELF WHEN I'M DOWN.
THIS IS ACCOMPLISHING NOTHING.

SWOOSH!
CASANDRA?
HELLO ELLI.
BEEP! BOOP! BEEP! BEEP!
CASANDRA...
...DIDN'T YOU GO TO THE MEMORIAL FOR...?
NO.

CASANDRA...
...YOU NEED TO GO TO THE MEMORIAL.
NO, I DON'T.
CASANDRA...
ELLI, LOOK...
MEMORIALS ARE JUST THERE TO MAKE YOU CRY.
THEY DO THESE BIG, DRAMATIC PRODUCTIONS DESIGNED TO WRENCH EVERY LAST TEAR OUTTA YOU.
THEY SAY,
"...OKAY, EVERYBODY,"
"...CRY NOW!"
"GO ON!"
"DO IT!"
NO ONE'S GETTING ME TO CRY ON COMMAND.
CASANDRA, MEMORIALS ARE THERE TO HELP YOU SAY "GOODBYE," AND GIVE YOU THE PERMISSION YOU NEED TO CRY. AND FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN OF FLESH-AND-BLOOD CREATURES, YOU'RE NOT LIKELY TO DO EITHER WITHOUT HELP.
I DON'T NEED HELP.
AND I'VE ALREADY CRIED.
I'M DONE NOW.
BESIDES, CRYING,
...I THINK, IS SEVERELY OVERRATED.
THEY SAY," CRYING WILL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER."
IT DOESN'T.
THE HURT STILL HURTS YOU.
AND I THINK,
"DEEP DOWN,
"...WE CRY BECAUSE WE WANT SOMEONE TO CARE, AND COME HELP US,
...MAKE IT ALL BETTER.

BUT YA KNOW?
I DON'T THINK THE WHITE KNIGHT'S GONNA COME.

WELCOME TO REALITY!
POSTCARDS ARE ON THE LEFT.
THINGS WERE MUCH EASIER BACK HOME ON TRILLIA.
I NEVER KNOW QUITE WHAT TO DO TO HELP YOU FLESH-AND-BLOOD CREATURES.
I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT IT, ELLI. WE'RE PRETTY CLUELESS OURSELVES.

I DO KNOW ONE THING, THOUGH. I KNOW THAT I HATE NARZ.
HIM AND HIS DAMN BONO KIRIAN EMPIRE.
SOMETIMES I WISH SOMEBODY WOULD KILL HIM.

SOMETIMES I WISH...
...I COULD KILL HIM!
SOMETIMES I WISH...

...I WISH I KNEW WHAT TO DO WITH THESE FEELINGS.
YOU COULD TALK ABOUT THEM.
NO...
...I... DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT THEM.

GOD, I SOUND LIKE MADISON.
HE DOESN'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.
NOW I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.
THAT'S TWO...

...SOON...
...the Silence...
...WILL CONSUME US!

SO, ELI...
...DID YOU AND YOUR SCIENTIST FRIENDS EVER FIGURE OUT HOW TO BLOCK THE TUL'SAR?
YES.
WE...
...EVEN HAVE A FREQUENCY THAT WILL BLOCK IT.
What?
Really?
YES.
Then...
THEN,
...WE CAN STOP THEM.
IF WE COULD USE THAT FREQUENCY...
...SEND IT OUT TO THE KEKAKOPOLOUS,
I'D STUN THEM. REMEMBER MEKON?
AND I'M PRETTY SURE THAT ONCE FREE, THE VROOL WOULDN'T HELP THE EMPIRE.
WE COULD...
CASANDRA,
...WE'VE THOUGHT OF THAT. BUT YOU MUST REMEMBER, THE BONO KIRO ARE NOT STUPID.
SURELY THEY'RE AWARE OF THE WEAKNESS IN THE TUL'SAR, AND UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE A WAY TO BLOCK OUR FREQUENCY.
But... But...
...What if you could get into the computer of the KEKAKOPOLOUS?
KEEP THEM FROM USING IT?
LIKE YOU DID ON THE WANDERING STAR?
CASANDRA ALL I DID WAS BLOCK SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS.
EVEN ON THE 'STAR I COULDN'T CONTROL THE ENTIRE SHIP.
AND IF THE KEKAKOPOLOUS IS AS BIG AS THEY SAY....
ADD TO THAT THE FACT WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THEY HAVE TUL'SAR VROOL ON THAT SHIP.
Okay.
I ADMIT IT. IT'S A LONG SHOT.
LET'S GIVE THE ALLIANCE A TRY FIRST.
AND THEN, IF THEY CAN'T STOP THE KEKAKOPOLOUS, WE CAN TRY.
What? HOLD ON!
CASANDRA! EVEN IF I DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING THIS SUICIDAL,
...THE LAST THING I'D EVER CONSIDER DOING IS BRINGING A CHILD WITH ME!

A "CHILD?!"
I FORFEITED MY CHILDHOOD A WHILE BACK, THANK YOU.
DON'T TURN ME AWAY BECAUSE OF MY AGE.
CASANDRA,
...YOU STILL HAVE YOUR WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF YOU!
SWOOSH!
Hah.
My LIFE.
EVERYTHING THAT DEFINED WHO I AM IS GONE.
WHAT DO I HAVE TO LIVE FOR?
NOTHING, IF ALL YOU ARE IS YOUR DEFINITIONS.
AS FOR MYSELF...
...I'M GLAD TO SAY THAT THERE'S MORE TO ME THEN THAT.
CAN I HELP YOU?
WELL, I DIDN'T SEE YOU AT THE MEMORIAL.
JOEY DIDN'T EITHER.
STUBBORN YOU ARE, THAT YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T COME, AND DECIDED TO LOOK FOR YOU HERE.
AND SO I FIGURED, THAT CONSIDERING HOW
OH, AND BY THE WAY,
...Hello!
Hello.
Now,
If you'll excuse me,
I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF AN ARGUMENT.

Oh?
WHAT ABOUT?
NOTHING.
THIS IS GETTING MORE INTRIGUING BY THE MOMENT.
YOU KNOW WHAT, MEKON?
I LIKED YOU A LOT, BETTER,
...WHEN YOU HATED MY GUTS.
OH, NEVER FEAR. I STILL DON'T LIKE YOU VERY MUCH,
...OR ELSE I WOULD HAVE LEFT,
...WHEN YOU SUGGESTED THAT I SHOULD...
SO, WHAT'S GOING ON?
I'M LISTENING
YOU
ARE
SO
IRRITATING,
DID YOU KNOW THAT?
OKAY, LOOK.
ELLI AND HER SCIENTIST FRIENDS HAVE BEEN WORKING ON THAT TOL'SAR THING YOU HAD IN YOUR HEAD,
THEY KNOW HOW IT WORKS NOW, AND THEY EVEN HAVE A FREQUENCY TO BLOCK IT, BUT THEY FIGURE THE BONO KIRO MUST'VE ALREADY PLANNED A WAY AROUND THIS WEAKNESS.
MOST LIKELY.
BUT THAT'S NOT REALLY WHAT WE'RE ARGUING ABOUT.
WE'RE ARGUING ABOUT MY AGE. IF SHE DECIDES TO TRY SOMETHING WITH THAT FREQUENCY, I WANT TO GO.
BUT SHE THINKS I'M TOO YOUNG.
EXACTLY.
IF YOU DECIDED TO DO THIS, WILL YOU TAKE THE WANDERING STAR?
MOST LIKELY IT'S THE SHIP I'M MOST FAMILIAR WITH.
THEN CASANDRA SHOULD GO IF SHE WANTS TO.
WHAT?!
ELLI, SHE'S FOUGHT HERE,
...RISKED HER LIFE,
...AND LOST FRIENDS HERE. SHE'S EARNED THE RIGHT.
I ONLY HOPE THAT YOU WILL LET ME COME ALONG, TOO.

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS.
LISTEN TO ME, I DIDN'T ARGUE WHEN CASI AND JOEY BEGAN FIGHTING THE BONO KIRO,
...BECAUSE THE ALLIANCE NEEDED THEM.
BUT THIS TIME, IN THIS MATTER, IF I CHOOSE TO DO IT, YOU ARE NOT NEEDED.
AND I WILL NOT RISK CHILDREN WITHOUT CAUSE.

ELLI...
NO. I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT.
GET OFF MY SHIP!
ELLI...

I SAID, GET OFF MY SHIP!
WANDERING STAR

oh, drat.
I LEFT MY HOT CHOCOLATE AND TOAST ON THE BRIDGE.

I'M GOING TO THE CAFETERIA.
I SUPPOSE THAT YOU COULD COME ALONG.

oh?
WON'T I UPSET YOUR APPETITE?
I WON'T LOOK AT YOU WHILE I'M EATING.
Well, OKAY THEN.

YOU KNOW, MEKON,
...THERE IS ONE SMALL BENEFIT TO YOUR NO LONGER HATING MY GUTS.
oh?

IF I ORDER A BACON CHEESEBURGER,
...I GET A BACON CHEESEBURGER.

YOU KNOW, I REALLY WISH SOMEONE WOULD GET AROUND TO PROGRAMING A FEW MORE FOOD ITEMS FOR US HUMANS IN THE FOOD PROCESSORS.
THE ONES THEY HAVE...

...I MEAN REALLY, TUNA CASSEROLE? BLAH!
TUNA CASSEROLE?
IT'S...
...UM...

JUST TRUST ME. YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO EAT IT.

REALLY? WELL, I'D STILL BE WILLING TO BET THAT IT'S BETTER THAN WHAT WE HAD TO EAT ON THE SHIP WHEN WE ESCAPED.

YEAH.
MAYBE.
I MIGHT'VE EVEN BEEN HAPPY TO HAVE THAT LUCKY, OLD STUFF.
WELL,
... MAYBE NOT.
GREETINGS, GENTLE BEINGS.
I AM COMMANDER NARZ,
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GREAT BONO KIRIAN EMPIRE,
... AND CAPTAIN OF THE KEKAKOPOLOUS.

UNDOUBTEDLY YOU HAVE ALREADY HEARD ABOUT OUR KEKAKOPOLOUS, AND THE TRAGEDY OF MA'DIVES
SUCH A PITY.
SO MUCH DESTRUCTION. SO VERY, VERY MANY LIVES LOST.
BUT PERHAPS MA'DIVES' TRAGEDY CAN HELP PREVENT OTHERS IN THE ALLIANCE FROM SHARING ITS SAD FATE.
LIKE RHEARU, IN WHOSE ORBIT WE SHALL BE VERY SOON.
PEOPLE OF THE ALLIANCE!
THERE IS NO REASON TO ALLOW YOURSELVES TO BE CRUSHED BENEATH THE DESTRUCTIVE MIGHT OF THE UNASSAILABLE KEKAKOPOLOUS!
THE WAR HAS BEEN CRUEL TO YOU ENOUGH ALREADY. YOU ALL HAVE LOST MUCH, AND SUFFERED GREATLY.
THE BONO KIRIAN EMPIRE HAS ONLY THE HIGHEST REGARD FOR YOU, AND ASKS YOU NOW TO LAY DOWN THE FIGHT.
WE ASK YOU TO JOIN WITH US, TO BECOME ONE OF OUR MANY WORLDS. WE ASK THAT YOU WELCOME US SO THAT WE MAY WELCOME YOU.
THINK WELL, PEOPLE OF THE ALLIANCE ON HOW YOU WILL RECEIVE US WHEN WE ARRIVE. LET THE WAR BE OVER BETWEEN US. LET THERE BE PEACE,
...AND LET YOUR CHILDREN GROW UP.
I'M GOING BACK TO TALK TO ELLI AGAIN, MEKON.
DO YOU WANT TO COME ALONG?
YES, I DO.

SWOOOSH!
YOU KNOW, I REALLY DON'T LIKE NARZ.
AND... HE'S GOING TO BE HERE SOON WITH HIS KEKAKOPOLOUS.
AND I SHOULD KNOW WHAT TO DO.
BUT I don't...
Elli?
CASANDRA...
I...
...I NEED TO ASK A FAVOR OF YOU.
Uh, SURE.
HELP ME FLY THE SHIP TO MY HOMEWORLD.
TO TRILL'A.
Huh?
Elli...
I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE PROBABLY HOMESICK.
We...
WE'RE ALL HOMESICK,
...But...
CASANDRA, THAT'S NOT WHY I'M GOING.
TRILLIA IS THE LAST PLACE IN THE UNIVERE I WANT TO GO.
BELIEVE ME.
BUT, I NEED THE ADVICE THEY CAN GIVE ME.
AND MAYBE, THEIR HELP.
ELLI...
...YOU CAN GET ADVICE HERE.
No...
...YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
TRILLIA IS DIFFERENT.
We...
...they...
THERE'S NO ONE HERE LIKE THE PEOPLE OF TRILLIA.
ALL OF TRILLIA IS UNITED
MENTALLY, EMOTIONALLY.
AND THE ELDERS...
...THERE IS NO ONE LIKE THE ELDERS.
YOU'RE RIGHT, ELLI..
I DON'T UNDERSTAND
I KNOW,
...BUT IF YOU COME WITH ME, MAYBE YOU WILL.

IF MADISON WILL COME, HE COULD HELP YOU. AND... MAYBE, IF THEY COULD SEE YOUR KIND, INSTEAD OF JUST MY MEMORIES, THEN THEY WILL UNDERSTAND YOU AS WELL.
MM.
PLEASE, CASANDRA. DO THIS FOR ME.
I HAVE TO GO THERE
AND IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE BEEN ONE WITH TRILLIA,
...THAT I'VE GOTTEN USED TO THE ISOLATION,
...TO HAVING SECRETS,
...AND...
...AND...
...I...
AND, YOU'RE AFRAID, AREN'T YOU? OF HOW MUCH YOU'VE CHANGED.
AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY WILL THINK OF YOU.
YES.
I KNOW WHAT THAT'S LIKE.
WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO COME ALONG?
ON THIS TRIP, MEKON, YES, THANK YOU.
CASANDRA,
WILL YOU COME, TOO?
I GUESS I WILL.

AND SO,

... WE WERE OFF.

TO MY SURPRISE, MADISON HAD AGREED TO COME ALONG, BUT HE WAS EVEN MORE SILENT AND CONTEMPLATIVE THAN BEFORE.

I WANTED TO GRAB HIM BY HIS SHOULDERS AND SHAKE HIM UNTIL THE OLD MADISON REDRIVED, BUT, I LET HIM BE.

THE TRIP DIDN'T TAKE LONG, THANKS TO THE FACT THAT SINCE TRILLIA WAS IN A UNINHABITED PART OF THE GALAXY,

AND FAR, FAR AWAY FROM ANY BATTLE ZONES, WE COULD TRAVEL AT TOP SPEED.

ELLI USED THAT TIME TO PREPARE US, AS BEST AS SHE COULD, FOR HER HOME.

THE PEOPLE OF TRILLIA, SHE TOLD US, HAD EVOLVED, LONG, LONG AGO, BEYOND THE NEED FOR PHYSICAL BODIES. THEY HAD BECOME SPARKLING ENERGY BEINGS, JOINED TOGETHER AS ONE MIND, ONE FAMILY. LIVING IN HARMONY WITH THEIR WORLD, A WORLD FREE OF MACHINES, AND BUILDINGS, AND FACTORIES.

THEN, IN 2187, A SHIP HAD LANDED, LOOKING FOR NATURAL RESOURCES FOR THE ALLIANCE. THE PEOPLE OF TRILLIA HAD BEEN AMAZED BY THE SILVERY CREATURE, AND HAD SURROUNDED IT, HOPING TO COMMUNICATE.

IT WAS SOME TIME BEFORE THEY UNDERSTOOD ENOUGH ABOUT THE SHIP TO REALIZE THAT ITS COMPUTER MIND WAS NOT ALIVE, AND THAT IT WAS PROBABLY THE TERRIFIED BEINGS IN IT'S STOMACH THAT THEY SHOULD BE TRYING TO TALK TO.

ELLI HAD BEEN THERE, THAT DAY, AND HAD BEEN ONE OF THE FIRST TO DISCOVER HOW TO USE THE SHIP'S COMPUTER TO BEGIN THE FIRST TENTATIVE STEPS TOWARD COMMUNICATION,

OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, THE ALLIANCE SENT MANY AMBASSADORS TO OPEN RELATIONS WITH TRILLIA, BUT WHAT TRILLIA LEARNED ABOUT THE ALLIANCE DID NOT IMPRESS THEM. WE STRUCK THEM AS INFANTS, STRUGGLING WITH WORDS, FIGHTING OVER MISUNDERSTANDINGS, FULL OF UNPLEASANT THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS. EVENTUALLY, TRILLIA ENDED ALL TIES. AND THAT, WAS THAT

BUT ELLI HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH OUR STRANGE MACHINES, AND WHEN THE LAST SHIP LEFT HER HOME, SHE HAD MADE SURE THAT SHE WAS ON IT.

ELLI, ARE YOU OKAY? YOU'VE BEEN AWFULLY QUIET.

YES, I'M JUST A LITTLE NERVOUS.

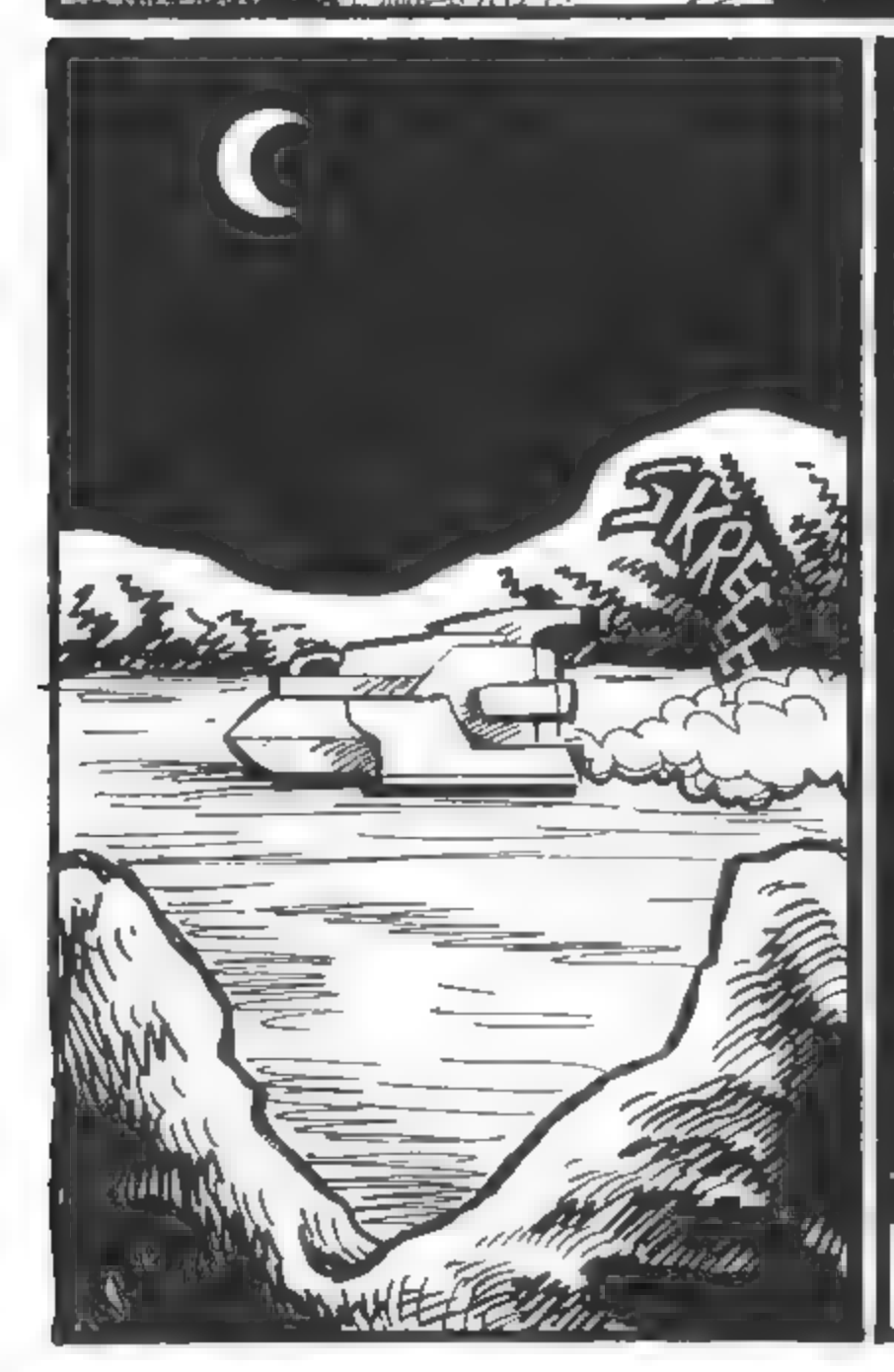
I SUPPOSE. SO, WHERE DO YOU WANNA LAND?

THERE'S A STRIP OF FLAT LAND OF TO THE SOUTHEAST. WE CAN LAND THERE.

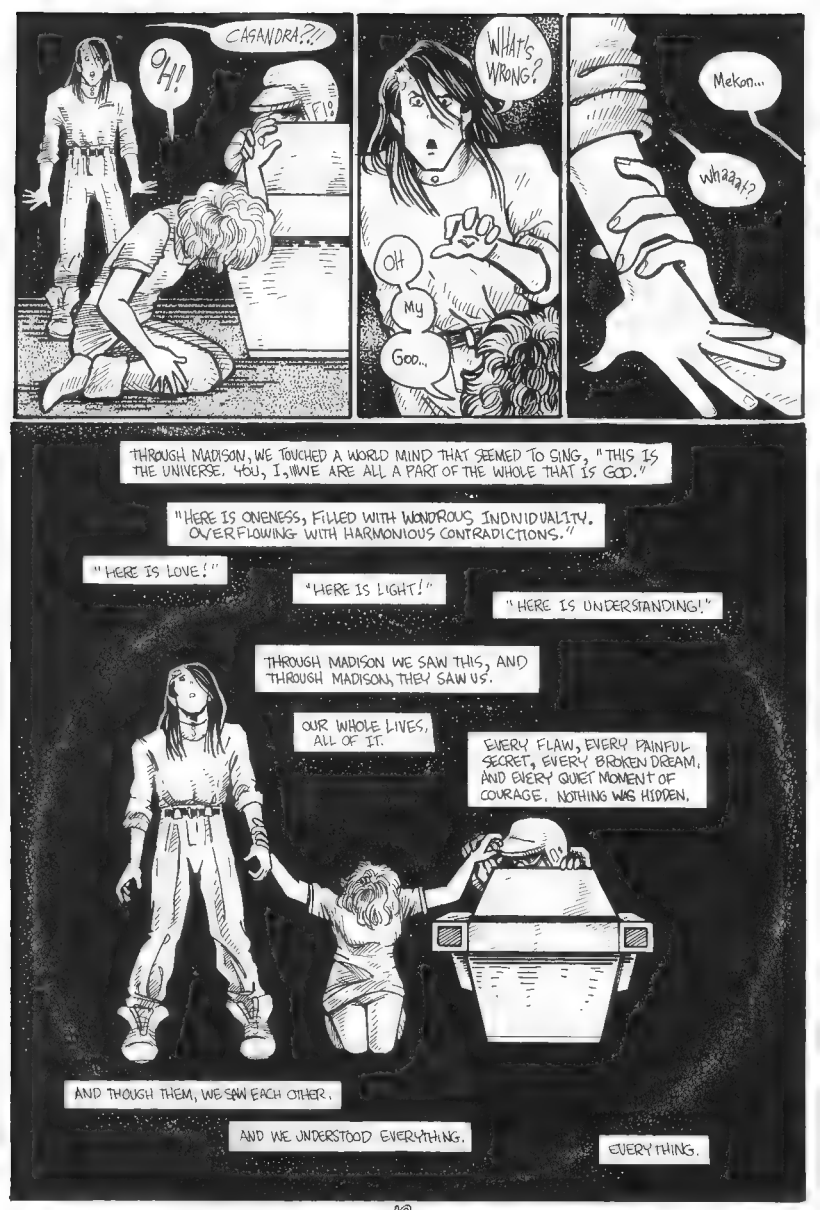
ELLI, ...DID YOU WANT TO HAIL ANYONE, OR SOMETHING?

TO LET THEM KNOW THAT WE'RE HERE?

THEY ALREADY KNOW THAT WE'RE HERE MEKON.



GASP!
Casandra?
Huh?
OH!
THEY'RE...
THEY'RE HERE.
OH!
MADISON! CAN YOU FEEL THEM? CAN YOU?
I...
...YES..
GODS!
ELI?
She's...
...With them...
...But it's okay.
GODS, CAST!
I CAN FEEL THEIR MINDS!
Madison?
YOU CAN'T IMAGINE.
INDESCRIBABLE.
MADISON?
YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND.
THERE ARE NO WORDS TO...
TO...
BUT...
...BUT...
...MAYBE I CAN SHOW YOU..!


CASANDRA?!!
OH!
F!
WHAT'S WRONG?
OH
MY
GOD...
Mekon...
whaaak?
THROUGH MADISON, WE TOUCHED A WORLD MIND THAT SEEMED TO SING, "THIS IS THE UNIVERSE. YOU, I, WE ARE ALL A PART OF THE WHOLE THAT IS GOD."
"HERE IS ONENESS, FILLED WITH WONDROUS INDIVIDUALITY. OVERFLOWING WITH HARMONIOUS CONTRADICTIONS."
"HERE IS LOVE!"
"HERE IS LIGHT!"
"HERE IS UNDERSTANDING!"
THROUGH MADISON WE SAW THIS, AND THROUGH MADISON, THEY SAW US.
OUR WHOLE LIVES, ALL OF IT.
EVERY FLAW, EVERY PAINFUL SECRET, EVERY BROKEN DREAM, AND EVERY QUIET MOMENT OF COURAGE. NOTHING WAS HIDDEN.
AND THOUGH THEM, WE SAW EACH OTHER.
AND WE UNDERSTOOD EVERYTHING.
EVERYTHING.

EVERYTHING!

AND THEN IT WAS GONE.

AND AS THAT WONDROUS UNDERSTANDING FADED,

...I WEPT.

AND, THEN, IN THE DEAFENING QUIET, WE HEARD A VOICE OVER THE SHIPS SPEAKERS...

...A THOUSAND VOICES, ALL SPEAKING TOGETHER.

WE UNDERSTAND.

AND WE WILL HELP.

A FEW OF US WILL GO BACK WITH YOU.

WANDERING THOUGHTS

PO BOX 474, BEAUMONT CA 92223-0474

Hey, hey, I just remembered something that should have been in the editorial. I had another "incident" with my subscriber files. Yep, and I'm surprised that my scream of horror/frustration/disbelief/etc. was not heard from coast to coast. Now, do you remember how my word processor ate my subscriber file last time? Remember how I said I'd solved the problem by making back-up files??? Well, there was one thing I didn't understand. And that is, that files aren't the only things that "go out" sometimes. SOMETIMES THE WHOLE DISK GOES. And, of course, my extra files were all on the same disk. Along with my Christmas Card file, and various other things. So, I drug out my old file from 1994, and I sent out a lotta books, but if you didn't get one (Fay Gertner, I know you didn't get one. All I have is your old address, and that one's broken. Help?), PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, let me know. And I swear, no more subscriptions after WANDERING STAR! I'm not pushing my luck. I know when I'm CURSED! It's like those darn flowers I keep killing in the backyard! I think God Himself has looked down from the heavens and said, "Thou Shalt Not Do Subscriptions." Anyway, help me work this one out, and I promise not to mess with the mail anymore. I'll just stay in my art room and draw pretty pictures, drink coffee and order out for pizza. Siiiigggh.

Hi!

Just a short note.

So, you're doing this CBG thing again, huh? I managed to sneak around it the last time, but that wouldn't work again, right? Have you any idea how hard it is to place ads in an American magazine (that I don't even read) from Norway?? Oh well, I think I got someone in the states (Nicole Johnson) to place them for me. She said she'd be doing "about five" so I'll take a chance and submit five cards. Do I get extra credit for REALLY trying?

Should I beg some more?

Should I up and leave you be?

Hah!

Be back with a longer letter.

Sometime.

Maybe.

Are-Morten Braaten

Norway

Hello, Are.

Dear Teri Sue:

If you've wondered whether it was a mistake to abandon the spacescapes on the covers of WANDERING STAR, then the cover of WANDERING STAR #18 should persuade you that you were right to do so. Casandra Andrews under the tree, amidst green grass (and high tides forever... hey, who let in the Outlaws?) and the beginning of a rainstorm (remember, rain is something still new to our heroine!), was gorgeous, and got to the heart of the issue: life goes on, if not in the blithe manner of the Beatles' "Obladi Oblada," then at least in the rueful manner of the Kinks' "Life Goes On" or in the blithe-rueful fashion of Scarlett O'Hara, convinced that she could get Rhett back tomorrow, for "tomorrow is another day." When John Kennedy was assassinated, Mary McGrory told Daniel Moynihan: "We'll never laugh again." Moynihan replied: "Oh, heavens, Mary, we'll laugh again. It's just that we'll never be young again." Casi Andrews will never be young again, but she will laugh again, if mainly at herself, and spend the rest of her time patching up things with Mekon (easy, since they're not truly friends) and with Madison (difficult, because they are). I found it very moving that in her conversation with Madison she never said that she was lucky to know him... or that he was lucky to know her. Perhaps she counted on our "psychic guy" to figure that out on his own. it wouldn't surprise me, considering how she found the time to give practical advice to Elli! Casi will be okay. WANDERING STAR has never been anything less than that since I first saw it, and I see no reason for it not to finish that way. Especially when we had such a good contrast between the healing efforts of Casi and the destructive efforts of Narz with the Ma'dives. Narz may have sounded as honorable as the Romulan commander in "Balance of Terror" or as regretful as the Klingon commander in "errand of Mercy," but don't let that fool you" the enemy in the former was vanquished, and in the battle in the latter never occurred. (Where are those Organians when you need them? We could use them in Bosnia.) This was more like the Dark Phoenix destroying Captain Lord Juber's ship in THE X-MEN. Well, there was a reckoning for that. There will be one here, or else Oliver isn't a cat, and you weren't named after a horse. Keep up the good work, and count on hearing from me in the new year.

Very truly yours,
Charles J. Sperling
Flushing, NY

P.S. Will SIRIUS be publishing DARKLIGHT, or are you shopping around for another publisher?

Hey there, Charles!

Thanks for the letter. And gee, ya make'th me blush. And yeah, SIRIUS will be publishing DARKLIGHT. Watch for it sometime in 1997. Whee, how exciting!

This next letter, I should probably prepare you for. I opened it up, and I read it and I cried. And I cried reading the short story that follows it. I... don't think I'll ever forget, either.

Dear Teri,

I just finished reading WANDERING STAR #18 and I had to write and share my feelings with you. I tried to send you e-mail via AOL but couldn't find any listings for Teri Wood, WANDERING STAR, Preston Sweet, Trulawna Villalobos or SIRIUS Entertainment, so I'm sending this via snail mail: I read pages 9-16 and I had to stop for a little bit (just as I had to stop now on rereading the pages) before I could finish the comic. You see, my wife Jeanine died just 3 months ago and reading the conversation between Casandra and Madison was like listening to the silent conversations I've been having with myself ever since. My Madison side just wants to curl up in a ball like an armadillo so I'll never be hurt again, and., gods, it hurts, every single day. But my Casandra side keeps reaching out, trying to find something or someone, not to replace what I had, but, I don't know, to substitute somehow for what used to be in the big empty space inside me now. It's a long journey, but I've made the first few steps and I think it'll be okay. I suspect you've had somewhat the same experience from the words you've written. If not, if you were able to capture the feelings in words without having to live through it, you're an even better writer than I thought. Thank you for an incredible catharsis. I can't wait for the last three issues. Feel free to print this if you want, it would be my first published letter. I'm also sending you a short, true story I wrote about Jeanine. I hope you enjoy it.

Norman.

THE BUTTERFLY

It was such a small thing, but heartbreakingly beautiful. My wife, Jeanine, had just died. My wife of fifteen years, my best friend, my confidante, my cheerleader, my first and only lover, keeper of my secrets. Died from a disease that slowly, oh, so slowly, destroyed her body and ate away her mind, but never touched her heart or her spirit. She had more heart than any hundred people and she was such a fighter that she hung on far, far longer than anyone thought she could. We cremated what Jeanine left behind and, one day, set out on a chartered fishing boat out of Norwalk into the waters of Long Island Sound. We anchored the boat, the Flying Tiger, read some poems, shared some feelings and said a short prayer. Then her mother and I scattered her ashes on the water, followed by several bouquets of flowers. After several moments of silence, the boat got underway to return to the dock. I sat down at the stern of the boat, looking out over the water, not trying to stop my tears. Suddenly, seemingly out of nowhere, a tiny white butterfly appeared, fluttering over the flowers floating on the water. "Look," I thought, "Jeanine's soul." I focused on that fragile little life, watching it through the filter of my tears as long as I could. It was the last time I ever saw the most important person in my life.

Hello Norman,

Life is a strange thing, isn't it? Full of so many joys and such tremendous sorrows. The sorrows do tend to stop you in your tracks at times, and I'm glad to hear that you've begun those first few steps back. I do know how hard it is. It is a tribute to Jeanine's character, her heart and her spirit that she could have evoked such love for you. She must have been a remarkable woman, and I thank you for the glimpse of her that I have found in your words. And I thank you again, for letting me share those words with my readers. I think, sometimes, when you've gone through something terrible, as you have, you feel quite alien in the "real" world, surrounded by people who mean well, but who can never, ever understand until they've walked the same path, and sometimes... Sometimes it helps just to know you're not the only one. My thoughts are with you, Norman.

"Arnold T. Blumberg, Production Manager for OVERSTREET FAN. (Hey, cool T-shirt!)"

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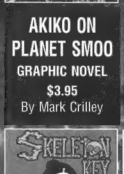

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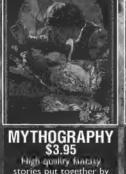

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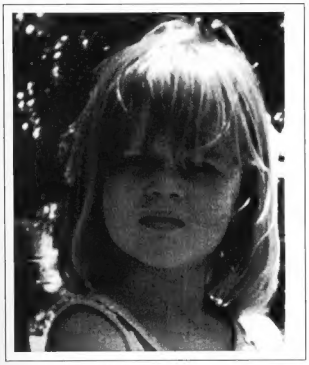
JAQUELINE ANNETTE BEARD

Criminal Abduction



JAQUELINE ANNETTE BEARD

Missing:	07/08/96	**Age Now:**	9 yrs 6 mths
Missing From:	CLARKSVILLE, TN	**Age Disap.:**	9
Birth:	04/16/87	**Race:**	White
Sex:	Female	**Eyes:**	Hazel
Height:	4' 7"	**Weight:**	55 lbs.
Hair:	Straight Blond		

ID Info: NCIC #M-943478915 - FRECKLES; SCAR/BOTTOM OF CHIN.

Circum: CHILD DISAPPEARED FROM HER HOME, A SUSPECT HAS BEEN ARRESTED, BUT THE CHILD HAS NOT BEEN LOCATED.

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT:

Missing Children...HELP Center at 1-800-USA-KIDS

OR

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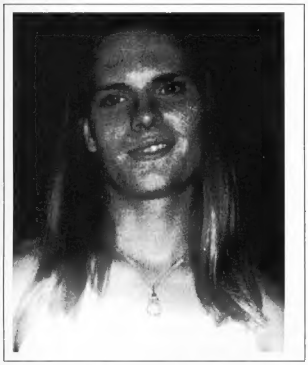
JASON HOUSE

Missing Juvenile



JASON HOUSE

Missing:	07/16/96	**Age Now:**	18 yrs 8 mths
Missing From:	RINGOLD, OK	**Age Disap.:**	18
Birth:	01/25/78	**Race:**	White
Sex:	Male	**Eyes:**	Blue
Height:	5' 11"	**Weight:**	155 lbs.
Hair:	Straight Blond		

ID Info: TATTOOS: RIGHT SHOULDER HAS TATTOO OF INITIALS. LEFT LEG HAS CHINESE WORDS. NCIC # M 946294511.

Circum: JASON WAS WORKING IN VALIANT, OK. HE HAS NOT BEEN HEARD FROM SINCE 7/16/96.

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT:

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